

Getting to Know Catherine the Great

Grade Level: 4th

Course: Social Studies

Lesson Topic: Catherine the Great- Introduction

Lesson Content: This is the first lesson in a unit on Catherine the Great. Today, you will be introducing the topic and gathering information about what students already know.

Learning Objectives: Students will complete the KWL chart (as a group) and begin reading or listening to *Who Was Catherine the Great?* by Pam Pollack and Meg Belviso. They will begin to build an understanding of who Catherine the Great was and why she is historically significant.

Supporting Materials: *Who Was Catherine the Great?* by Pam Pollack and Meg Belviso (Penguin Workshop, 2021), graphic organizers and reproducibles included in this lesson plan (KWL chart, Venn diagram, Who Was She? graphic organizer), world map or globe

Critical Thinking Questions: What do you and Catherine the Great have in common? What do you admire about Catherine the Great? What words would you use to describe Catherine the Great? (Note: these questions may be most appropriate at the end of the unit, when students are more familiar with Catherine the Great)

In-Class Work: KWL Chart, reading aloud, discussion

Instructional Procedures:

1. Complete the first two columns of the KWL chart (attached) as a group. This will allow you to find out what students know, and what they wonder, about Catherine the Great. Leave the third column blank; you will fill this in at the end of the unit, when students reflect on what they have learned.
2. Read pages 1-16 of *Who Was Catherine the Great?* by Pam Pollack and Meg Belviso aloud. As you read, point out the appropriate areas on the map or globe.
3. Talk together about the content of the pages. Invite students to add additional items to the KWL chart; they probably have more to wonder about now!

Homework or Project Ideas: Venn Diagram, Who Was She? Graphic Organizer (attached; these could both be assigned later in the unit as homework or done during class); Interview with Catherine the Great (the class comes up with interview questions and answers, and then two students- one as the interviewer, and one as Catherine the Great- perform the questions together).

Verbal Notes: Throughout the lesson, maintain engagement by using strategies such as:

- Asking students to give a thumbs up if they have heard of Catherine the Great
- Asking students to write on their whiteboards the year they think Catherine the Great was born or the country where she was born. Have them hold these up so you can see their answers.

Catherine the Great KWL Chart

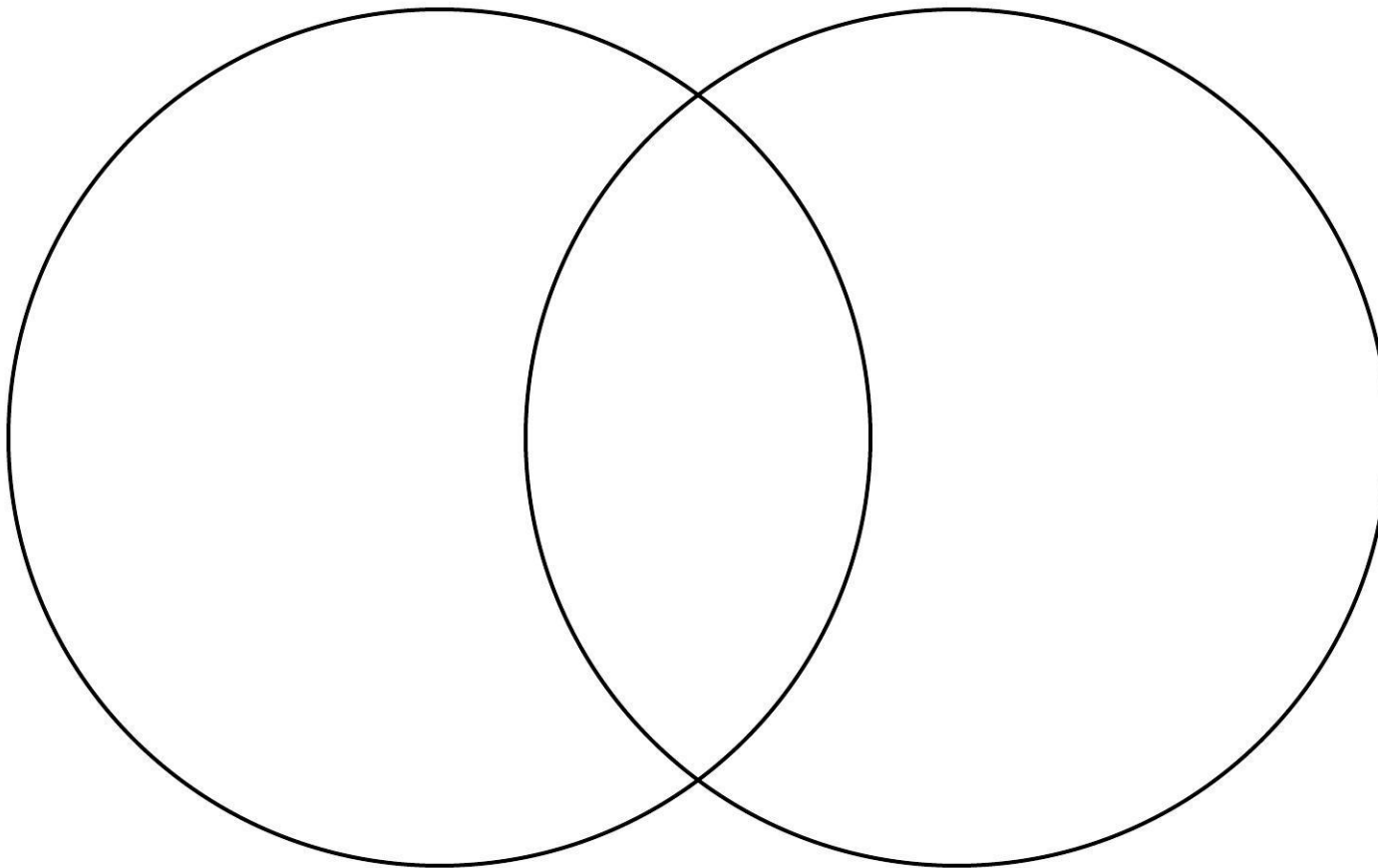
What do I KNOW about Catherine the Great?	What do I WONDER about Catherine the Great?	What have I LEARNED about Catherine the Great?

Catherine the Great and Me
Venn Diagram

What do you and Catherine the Great have in common? What's unique to each of you?

Catherine the Great

Me

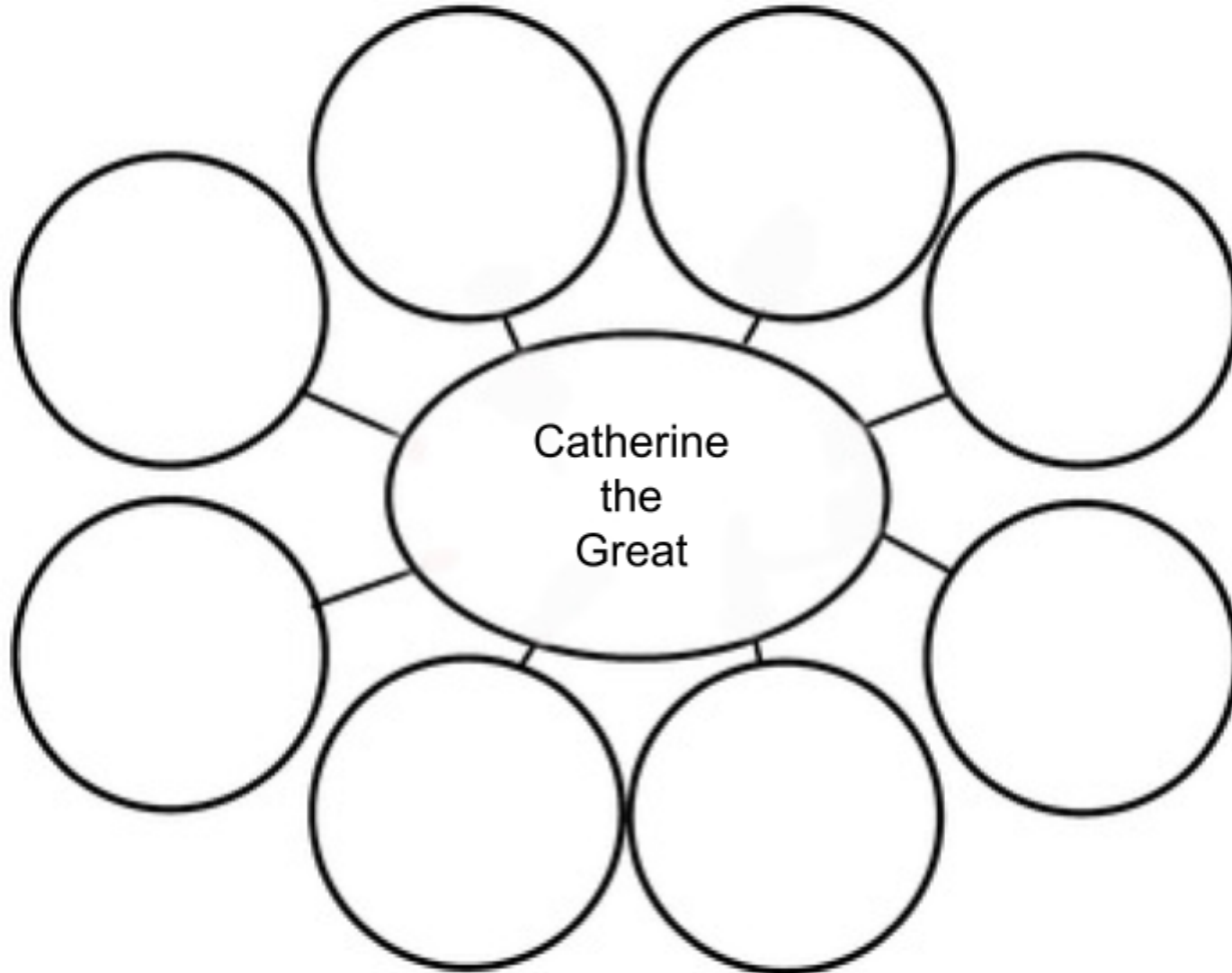


Notes about Catherine the Great

As we read, make notes about Catherine the Great on this page.

Who Was She? Graphic Organizer

Below, fill in each circle with something you've learned about Catherine the Great. These could be words that describe her, or they could be specific facts or achievements.



What Have I Learned? Free Writing Activity

Now that we've finished reading *Who Was Catherine the Great?* by Pam Pollack and Meg Belviso, write about what you know about her!